CLAIMS:

1. A community-based collaborative knowledge system which can be connected to a plurality of client terminals via a network, and supports knowledge accumulation by categorizing and accumulating messages posted from each client terminal to a virtual community, comprising:

access control means for making user authentication of a client terminal as an access request source so as to permit the client terminal to post a message; and

community processing means for managing a plurality of virtual communities in each of which a plurality of client terminals can participate, and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to each virtual community, from the client terminals, which are granted access permission by said access control means, for respective topics, said community processing means including message moving means for moving the categorized and accumulated messages between the virtual communities in accordance with an instruction from an administrator.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein all messages in at least one source virtual community designated by the administrator are batch-moved to a destination virtual community designated by the administrator, and the at least one source community is

then deleted to combine the virtual communities.

3. A system according to claim 2, wherein said community processing means includes:

means for storing community management information used to manage members who participate in each virtual community; and

means for updating the community management information to make members who participate in the source community become members of the destination community after batch movement of messages by said message moving means.

4. A system according to claim 1, wherein said message moving means moves some of messages in the source virtual community designated by the administrator to at least one new virtual community created by the administrator so as to divide the virtual community.

5. A system according to claim 1, wherein said community processing means has at least a community table for storing community data associated with virtual communities, and a thread table for storing thread data associated with threads as sets of messages posted to the virtual communities,

said message moving means comprises:

means for searching the community table and the thread table in response to an instruction from a client terminal of an administrator, and sending

community data managed by the administrator and corresponding thread data to the client terminal of the administrator;

means for receiving thread movement data, which designates source and destination communities, and some or all thread data of the source community, which are input at the client terminal of the administrator; and

means for moving the thread data on the basis of the thread movement data to reflect a change in the thread table, and updating a member list of the community data in correspondence with the thread movement.

6. A message moving method in a community-based collaborative knowledge system which can be connected to a plurality of client terminals via a network, and supports knowledge accumulation by categorizing and accumulating messages posted from each client terminal to a virtual community, comprising:

the access control step of making user authentication of a client terminal as an access request source so as to permit the client terminal to post a message; and

the community processing step of managing a plurality of virtual communities in each of which a plurality of client terminals can participate, and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to each virtual community, from the client terminals, which are

granted access permission in the access control step, for respective topics; and

the message moving step of moving the categorized and accumulated messages between the virtual communities in accordance with an instruction from an administrator.

7. A method according to claim 6, wherein all messages in at least one source virtual community designated by the administrator are batch-moved to a destination virtual community designated by the administrator, and the at least one source community is then deleted to combine the virtual communities.

8. A method according to claim 7, further comprising the step of updating community management information used to manage members who participate in each virtual community, so as to make members who participate in the source community become members of the destination community after batch movement of messages in the message moving step.

9. A method according to claim 6, wherein the message moving step includes the step of moving some of messages in the source virtual community designated by the administrator to at least one new virtual community created by the administrator so as to divide the virtual community.

10. A method according to claim 6, wherein the message moving step comprises:

the step of searching a community table for storing community data associated with virtual communities, and a thread table for storing thread data associated with threads as sets of messages posted to the virtual communities, in response to an instruction from a client terminal of an administrator, and sending community data managed by the administrator and corresponding thread data to the client terminal of the administrator;

the step of receiving thread movement data, which designates source and destination communities, and some or all thread data of the source community, which are input at the client terminal of the administrator; and

the step of moving the thread data on the basis of the thread movement data to reflect a change in the thread table, and updating a member list of community data in correspondence with the thread movement.

11. A program used in a community-based collaborative knowledge system which can be connected to a plurality of client terminals via a network, and supports knowledge accumulation by categorizing and accumulating messages posted from each client terminal to a virtual community, said program making a computer execute:

the access control step of making user authentication of a client terminal as an access request source so as to permit the client terminal to

post a message; and

the community processing step of managing a plurality of virtual communities in each of which a plurality of client terminals can participate, and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to each virtual community, from the client terminals, which are granted access permission in the access control step, for respective topics; and

the message moving step of moving the categorized and accumulated messages between the virtual communities in accordance with an instruction from an administrator.

12. A program according to claim 11, wherein all messages in at least one source virtual community designated by the administrator are batch-moved to a destination virtual community designated by the administrator, and the at least one source community is then deleted to combine the virtual communities.

13. A program according to claim 12, further comprising the step of updating community management information used to manage members who participate in each virtual community, so as to make members who participate in the source community become members of the destination community after batch movement of messages in the message moving step.

14. A program according to claim 11, wherein the message moving step includes the step of moving some of

messages in the source virtual community designated by the administrator to at least one new virtual community created by the administrator so as to divide the virtual community.

15. A program according to claim 11, wherein the message moving step comprises:

the step of searching a community table for storing community data associated with virtual communities, and a thread table for storing thread data associated with threads as sets of messages posted to the virtual communities, in response to an instruction from a client terminal of an administrator, and sending community data managed by the administrator and corresponding thread data to the client terminal of the administrator;

the step of receiving thread movement data, which designates source and destination communities, and some or all thread data of the source community, which are input at the client terminal of the administrator; and

the step of moving the thread data on the basis of the thread movement data to reflect a change in the thread table, and updating a member list of community data in correspondence with the thread movement.